



OICS Ref: 0538

Tracey Sharpe
Committee Clerk
Legislative Council Committee Office of Western Australia
18-32 Parliament House
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Ms Sharpe

RE: Questions on notice

On Monday 11 April I provided evidence to the Select Committee into alternate approaches to reducing illicit drug use and its effects on the community. I took the following two questions on notice.

1. What is the percentage of people on remand who are released within a week and within the month?
2. What is the current situation with the treatment programs backlog for juvenile offenders?

Remand

I initially stated, "25 per cent of people put in remand were out within less than a week, so they had managed to arrange bail, and roughly 50 per cent were out within a month."

This information was drawn from our 2015 report on the remand population where we found:

The length of time people on remand varies greatly. A large number are remanded for short periods; around 55 per cent are held for less than one month and almost a quarter are held for less than one week.¹

¹ Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *Western Australia's rapidly increasing remand population* (October 2015)

Treatment programs

I provided information on the backlog in assessments that allow adults to be placed in treatment programs. And was then asked to comment on the situation with juvenile offenders. I took this on notice.

The situation for juveniles is very different to adults. In our last inspection of Banksia Hill we stated:

Overall, by 2017, programs for young people were better-resourced. More offending issues and needs were covered, more programs focused on throughcare, and many used Aboriginal service providers. Better frameworks for monitoring and evaluation were also being established, and there was a new module on TOMS to assist in program administration.

Programs staffing had stabilised. This allowed more consistent delivery of three programs by psychological services: Emotional Management, Healthy Relationships, and the Girls' Program. However, Step Up, a more intensive program addressing aggressive behaviour, was not running in 2017 because of staffing and workload issues for psychological services. In addition, the Department had secured a broader range of programs from community service providers, along with enhanced re-entry support services.

The now-defunct Youth Justice Board's Innovation Fund had provided funding for programs from the Wirrpanda Foundation and As One Nyitting. A new tender process was finalised in March 2017, and the main provider selected was a consortium led by Centrecare, and also involving Uniting Care West and the Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service. Hope Community Services provided bail services and a life skills program².

Despite this we reported on gaps in intensive addictions programs and programs specifically for girls. In contrast to the situation in the adult estate, we saw young people being placed in programs simply to fill vacancies, even if they had completed the same or similar programs.

An assessment tool specifically for youth is used to determine treatment needs. The assessment is undertaken at the time of sentencing. The Department also strives to assess young people on remand.

During the last inspection, the case planning unit responsible for completing assessments was under pressure and struggling with its workload. This was largely due to staff turnover,

² Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), *2017 Inspection of Banksia Hill Detention Centre* (February 2018)

including managers, and delays created through disruptions to the centre. This has effected young people on remand as those that are sentenced are prioritised for assessment.

As of 21 March 2019:

- An assessment had been carried out for all 53 young people currently in Banksia Hill that were sentenced
- Assessments had been carried out for 59 of the 74 young people on remand (80%)

Kind regards



Neil Morgan
Inspector of Custodial Services

25 March 2019